(d) if so, the reason for the under achievement; and

(e) what steps are being taken to improve the performance of this Yojana during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (d) Considering the nature of benefit and eligibility criteria prescribed under Rajiv Gandhi Shramik Kalyan Yojana, no target can be fixed. Insured Persons covered under ESI Scheme and going out of insurable employment involuntarily on or after 1st April, 2005, on account of closure of a factory of establishment, retrenchment, or permanent invalidity arising out of non-employment injury, after being in an insurable employment and having contributd under the scheme for five or more years, are entitled to claim unemployment allowance not less than 50% of wages, for a maximum period of 6 months during entire service.

(e) The Scheme has been widely publicised through newspapers, posters, as also through holding of seminars by the Regional Director/ Joint Directors in the Regions/Sub-Regions in the year 2005. Nearly 50,000 posters highlighting the benefit available under the scheme have been printed and distributed. In addition, extension of time for submission of the applications, was raised from 3 months to another 3 months (total 6 months) from the date of loss of employment by the Insured Persons. In the current year, also, publicity of the Scheme has been intensified.

Pending court cases about Defence deals

*311. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases pending in various courts with regard to defence procurement and related issues;

(b) the number of cases in which charge-sheets have been filed but trials have not begun;

(c) the total amount involved in all these cases; and

(d) the total number of persons presently in custody?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) The Question seeks information relating to cases pending in various courts in

the country including cases involving subordinate offices, line directorates and field formations. The cases involving line directorates and field formations are handled and monitored directly by them. The details are being collected and the same will be laid on the Table of the House.

Private and foreign investments in higher education

*312. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering any steps to encourage private and foreign investment in higher education;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government are treating higher education as a private good, rather than merit good, only to satisfy the GATS conditionality; and

(d) if not, what is the basis for Government's submission of revised offers at WTO on August 24, 2005?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Private and foreign investment is already allowed in the higher education sector in India. Government has *vide* Press Note 2 (2000 Series) dated 11.02.2000 permitted Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) up to 100% on the automatic route in the education sector. A proposal for the regulation of entry and operation, maintenance of quality, and prevention of commercialization of education by Foreign Educational Institutions in Higher Education is currently under consideration of the Government.

(c) and (d) As per the classification of services adopted under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the WTO *vide* document number MTN.GNS/W/120 dated 10 July, 1991 of the WTO, Education Services cover (i) Primary education services, (ii) Secondary education services, (iii)Higher education services, (iv) Adult education services and (v) Other education services. However, public education services, provided free of cost on a non-commercial basis and not in competition with other service suppliers is outside the purview of GATS. In our Revised Offer, under Education services, we have offered to take partial commitments, with adequate checks and balances, only in Higher Education Services. The Revised Offer is conditional and can be modified or withdrawn at any time during the negotiations.